Environmental clearance for Hydro-Electric Power Projects

382. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Hydro-Electric Power Projects submitted by the competent authority of Kerala State for environmental clearance are under consideration;

(b) if so, the details and the status of such projects as on today;

(c) whether the competent authority has taken any decision on environmental clearance of Pooyamkutty project;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Tropical Botanical Garden Research Institute (TBGRI) has submitted the Environmental impact assessment report of the Pooyamkutty Project; and

(f) whether environmental clearance will be granted based on the above report; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Two projects namely Mankulam Hydro-Electric Project and Athirapally Hydro-Electric Project have been received from the Government of Kerala for environmental clearance. In respect of the Mankulam Hydroelectric Project, the proponents have been asked to obtain the forestry clearance whereas in respect of the Athirapally Hydro-Electric Project, the proponents have been asked to obtain the comments from the Central Water Commission.

(c) The Government of Kerala has not submitted any fresh proposal the environmental clearance of Pooyamkutty Project.

(d) to (f) Do not arise.

Action against poachers from Myanmar, Indonesia and Thailand

383. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of NVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that poachers from Myanmar, Indonesia and Thailand were staying into Indian Ocean at Andaman and Nicobar Islands and taking away crocodiles and other species; and

(b) if so, the action taken to check such subversive activities?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Vessels from Myanmar, Indonesia, Thailand and other neighbouring countries do visit the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and sometimes manage to take sea cucumber and other marine products. Occasional cutting of trees is also resorted to by them for meeting their camping requirement and for repairing/construction of boats.

(b) The action taken to prevant such subversive activities include:

1. Regular patrolling by Forest Department of the Union Territory.
2. Patrolling by Coast Guards and Indian Navy in deep sea.
3. Camps by Police in far flung Islands.
4. Technical and financial assistance to Andaman and Nicobar administration by Government for protection of wildlife in Protected Areas.

Setting up of Utkal Alumina Project in Orissa

384. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the area proposed for setting up of the Utkal Alumina Project in Kashipur Block of Rayagada district in Orissa, has wildlife of the nature of Bears, and other mammals;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any expert opinion from the leading wildlife conservation organisations has been obtained on the likely impact of this project on the wildlife, both flora and fauna; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Utkal Alumina Project in Kashipur Block of Rayagada district in Orissa was approved by Government under Section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 on 19-4-1993. As per the information available with Government, the only mammals reported from the project area are porcupine, hare, fruit bat, mongoose and rat.